

**NUFS Workshop 2016*****Newsletter No.9*****Workshop in January****<Part 1>**

**Date:** January 14, 2017, 10:30-14:30

**Venue:** Nagoya NSC College, Room A-31, Bldg. Minami

**Title:** "Teaching Writing (Part I): Pedagogies for Five Stages of Writing" / "Teaching Writing (Part II: The Process of Writing and Writing from Within"

**Presenter:** Curtis Kelly (Kansai University)

**Abstract:**

As English writers, Japanese students go through five stages of development. Each stage has its own specialized teaching method. The emphasis will be on the middle three, since these apply to NUFS Workshops teachers' situations, and the participants will be given training in designing lessons.

The first stage, as children, is learning to write English letters and words. Reading stories to children, while pointing at the words helps them gain a sense of words and direction. Then, in junior and senior high school, they learn how to write sentences, the second stage. Sentence combining is a way to help them gain "syntactic maturity" at this stage. While working on accuracy is useful, using extensive writing with a focus on fluency provides special advantages as well. The third stage involves mastering paragraph writing. Having students analyze paragraphs and teaching them how to write topic sentences is important at this stage. Concentrating on prewriting and using a "building" approach is effective, especially with reluctant learners. The fourth stage involves writing expository compositions. Teaching critical thinking, strategies of development, and support is useful, skills Japanese tend to be weak at. The final stage involves mastering the special rules of academic or professional writing.

**The number of participants: 33**

**1. Interesting activities you might want to use in your class. Why?**

- I really like the combining sentence activity. By using them, students don't have to focus on the small things. They can focus more on sentence organization.
- I am very thankful for the sample textbook I got today. I'm sure I can draw many ideas from that. The combining sentence activity is very powerful I think. I hope to use it in the new semester, because it draws attention to major components of sentences and grammar structure.
- Writing lessons should be prepared for various ways. Therefore, this workshop is practical for me to make lesson.



- How the kids pick up the words and languages
- Extensive writing journals.
- I want to use ‘sentence combining exercise’. The activity itself is simple but can be applied for many purposes. For example, after reading one chapter of textbook, students will be given some sentences and then they make them a story. I think it can be good activity for reviewing some key sentences/words.

## 2. What you learned from today's workshop

- I have learned a lot how to write. It's difficult for students to learn writing, but to tell the truth, I had thought it was so difficult for me to ask the students to write. I'd been at a loss. I'd like to try various ways I learned today.
- I learned that there are key things to teach on each stage. I also learned teachers should see well to see which level their students are and set a goal that suits them.
- How to build up learners' ability and confidence at the sub-sentence level.
- Peer correction doesn't work but peer feedback motivates students.
- How to pill students' own ability to connecting words.



## 3. Questions and Answers

### 1) How can we teach pre-sentence writing i.e. vocabulary writing?

A: I am not an expert on this, but here is a site with some great ideas:

<http://busysteacher.org/2921-teaching-english-vocabulary-10-fabulous-ways-to.html>

### 2) Are there any good and effective ways to learn each grammar items? Is communication necessary in learning grammar?

A: Grammar should always be shown in context. “Noticing” is an effective way to teach it before sentence combining. Here are some ways to do so:

<https://tesolatrennernyc.wordpress.com/2014/03/13/teaching-tip-noticing-activities-for-presenting-grammar/>

### 3) What do you think of using ‘template’ to write a good essay? Some say, the patterned-articles can be well organized.

A: Good question. I think copying models and using templates is especially effective for students who are beginners and have no idea how to start. The problem is that the organization is not really theirs. Therefore, this method is less effective for experienced writers. With a template, though you might be giving them the organization, you can still keep the content original by having them write about themselves.

### 4) Which part of writing activity should we do together in class and which for assignment at home?

A: It really depends on your students and class schedule. You have to figure that out. For sentence combining, I usually (but not always) assign it as homework and discuss the answers in class. For

composition writing, I do most of the prewriting activities in class, the writing at home, and the post-writing activities in class.

All this is explained in detail in the *To the Teacher* sections of Significant Scribbles or Writing from Within.

## 5) What do you think of Eiken 2<sup>nd</sup> grade English composition and how they should assess them?

A: The Grade 2 writing test asks for these skills:

**Can write at length about topics from everyday life and topics relevant to some social, professional, and educational situations.**

Can write explanations of things that he/she is interested in (e.g. simple recipes, instructions for using appliances).

Can write a summary of things that he/she has heard or read and is interested in (e.g. the contents of a lecture, an article from a magazine or newspaper).

Can express his/her own ideas and opinions about familiar topics related to everyday life (e.g. diet and health).

Can write simple texts introducing elements of Japanese culture (e.g. food, national holidays, festivals).

Can describe what he/she would like to do and explain why (e.g. explain why he/she would like to study abroad or be employed by a certain company).

Can write simple responses to orders or inquiries, provided that they are related to his/ her work or field of expertise.

I do not know the details of how they grade, but obviously, students writing in paragraphs with some kind of expository organization (topic sentences, transition words, clear organization) will get better scores. Students writing one sentence per line with no paragraph organization will be given lower scores, even with the same level of accuracy.

## 6) How can I encourage students to write English sentences, keep them continuing?

A: It really depends on the task. To keep writing, they need two things: motivation and content. You can get both if you have them write about themselves, such as “Write about:

- a classmate that became a friend
- a time you were really scared
- something you loved when you were a child
- something you are sorry about

One part of Significant Scribbles I did not mention is that students are supposed to write a diary in English too, with grades decided by how many pages they write.



## 7) How could we, students, business person learn audience conscious writing?

A: Great question. All writing should be audience conscious. As a teacher, it is your duty to clearly define who the audience

is. Having students write to their peers, and letting the peers see the paper before you collect it is one effective way to make them audience conscious too.

For general writing too, just like a presentation, the writer must answer the reader's basic question "Why should I care?" Starting with an attention getter, such as a common problem the readers have, and later offering a solution is effective.

## <Part 2>

**Date:** January 14, 2017, 14:30-17:00

**Venue:** Nagoya NSC College

**Advisors:** Kazuyoshi Sato, Juanita Heigham, Duane Kindt (NUFS)

**Abstract:** Monthly report on action research

**The number of participants:** 17



(University teacher's group)



(Junior high school and elementary school teachers' group)



(Senior high school teachers' group)

## Workshop in February (Scheduled)

**Date:** February 25, 2017, 10:30-14:30 (Part 1), 14:30-17:00 (Part 2)

**Venue:** Nagoya NSC College, Building Minami, Room A31

**Presenter:** Junko Yamanaka (Chukyo University, Aichi Gakuin University)

**Title:** "Evaluating Your Students' Extensive Reading"

Please send an email to [chihaya143@nufs.ac.jp](mailto:chihaya143@nufs.ac.jp) (Chihaya) to attend this workshop.